



# From January 2020 (Volume 109)





January 2020

It's so hard to get my head round how fast our life is passing. Today, Larnie is with Tammy in Disney World Florida (again!) and she is 21 today. Tammy is now over 50 and yet we are still active and hopefully able to carry on with our travels. Ben is in hospital again but signs are that his suspected cancer is contained and treatable and scans and tests are continuing ..but after his transplants obviously everything is on hold till the 'all clear'...but we are all very positive.

DP is having a great time with the kids who adore him and he seems to have a couple of 'special' young ladies in his life but he has so many friends that he is always doing something, often in unusual locations.

Peachy is a lovely cuddly granddaughter and often just phones or WhatsApp's just to say 'hi' and we get on so well.

Beau is also a great grandson and very thoughtful and ever growing. They are no longer 'kids' .They are now young people in their own rights and we are so proud of them.

Likewise, Angela is delightful and a fantastic mum and the fact that DP and Angela get on so well despite not being a couple any more is a strong basis and example for the children.

On a personal level, Lynn and I made a resolution not to travel so much this year ...and immediately broke it by my fixing a short trip to Lapland. (This was to have been a surprise for her 75th birthday coming up in February but she caught me checking details on the computer). So we were booking it with Mike at Scott's Travel when Ivor phoned and asked us to join then in Spain in April. We then realised our Avios Companion voucher expires in August so we 'had to' book a long haul flight to take advantage of that.

We therefore booked a new route that BA have just started ...flying to Portland on the USA West Coast. I have already got some suggestions where to go by using the Trip Advisor Forum. As if that wasn't enough we are also booking a walking holiday break in Tuscany with the company that had arranged our Cumbria Way walk last year.

Yes, we know it's not necessary, but we are also aware that at our age we won't be able to continue travelling much longer so let's do it while we can. No steak....just egg and chips from now on!

Lynn and I still argue like mad but this is balanced by our laughing together (even madder). Today we are going to Tammy and Ben's to check that no post is stuck in their letter box (Sam is with their dog walker) and we are then taking a bus to London Bridge and walking to Tate Modern to see some great-sounding exhibitions there.. In this miserable gloomy weather that's a great thing to do. (some pictures later on in this volume

Politically the world is mad. Johnson here has had a massive majority so hopefully he will use this power for good. We think he's a buffoon but the best of a crummy bunch...so here's hoping.

Trump killed the Iranian leader yesterday using a drone and there will be a vast reaction to this...watch this space.

Climate change is a very real issue and Lynn and I differ here. I feel that we must change our lifestyle and the UK can lead by example, but China etc are all hell-bent on continuing to use fossil fuels and will not concede to changes.

Meanwhile in Australia today we have hearing about 1000 homes destroyed with 23 lives lost and huge fires raging. It is not easy to comprehend what they are going through.

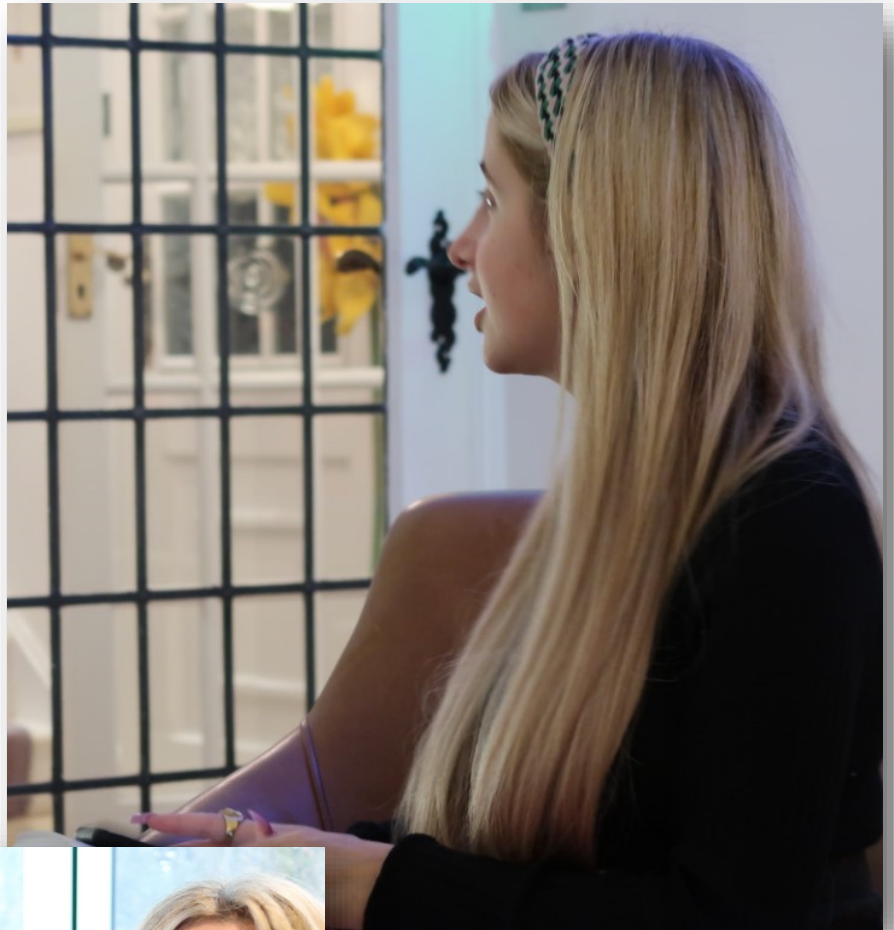
I am very aware that Lynn and I now have a very sheltered life and are enjoying ourselves but realistically we are willing to change should it be necessary and are also very conscious of how hard we have worked for over 50 years and built up what we have now without exploiting anyone and through totally honest means.

Not blowing our own trumpets but we will continue to behave sympathetically to others and hopefully being good people as we continue our lives.. Sorry not preaching but just re-addressing the balance as possibly my notes here may appear very self indulgent.

January 2020



## Photo History



Lynn and myself with Tammy & Larnie around December 2019







Crowds outside Tower of London just after Christmas



Always busy...Potters Field near Tower Bridge and More London

..years ago Lynn and I catered for the finish of a marathon here and it looked so different (see if those pictures are still 'findable')







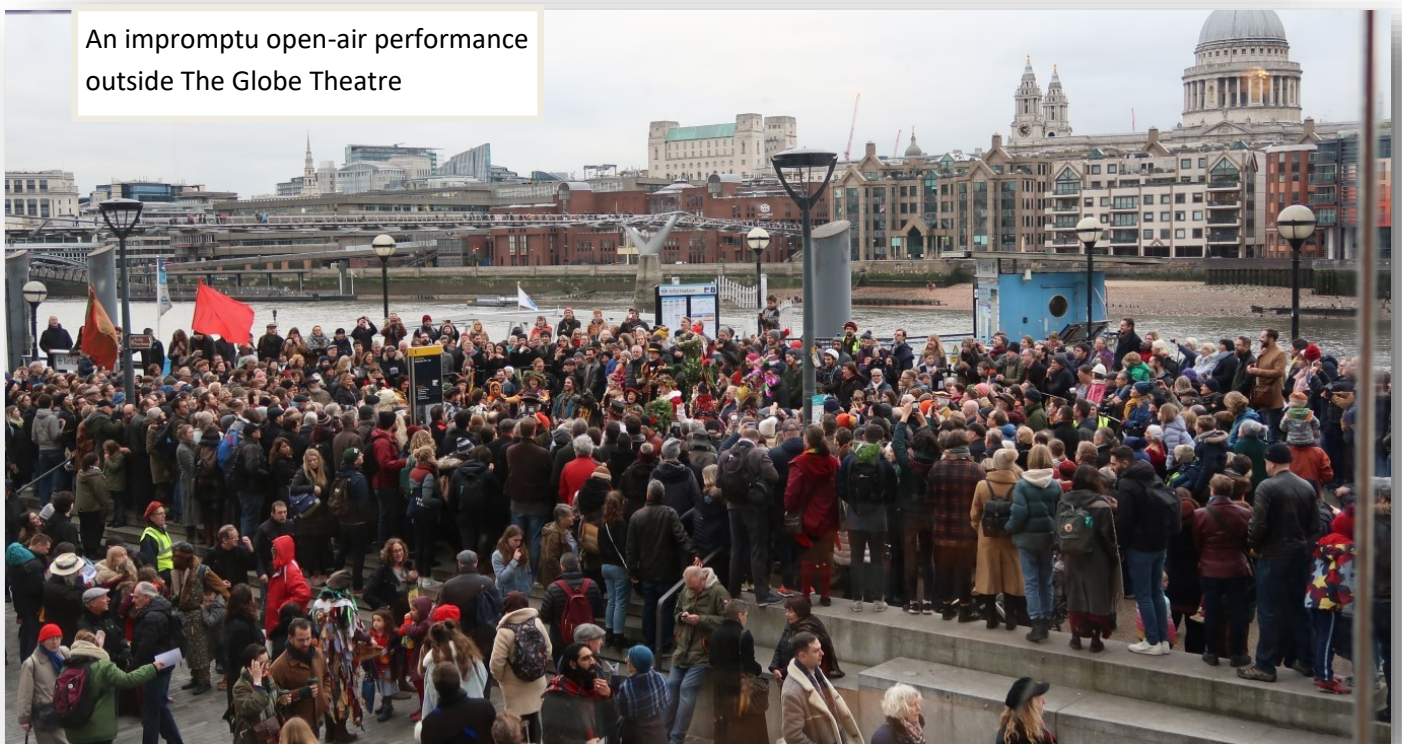
## Photo History



A few of the 'walkers' and wives took a South Bank walk with us just after Christmas. (Normally a male-only preserve!)



An impromptu open-air performance outside The Globe Theatre







# The fascination of bubbles







## Photo History



Following those elusive bubbles as they drifted down the Thames







### Photo History



Kara Walker drew inspiration for this Turbine Hall installation from the Queen Victoria memorial

Walker said when she first visited Europe she was shocked by the grand scale of colonial-era monuments. "I think as an American girl coming to Europe for the first time as an art student, I was perversely moved by the grandeur of the palaces," she said. "Because it really is very jarring when you think about what that's built on the backs of."

Since the initial opening of Tate Modern (where we were invited to a pre-public opening) there have been many 'installations'. Lots of them were totally weird...(to be kind) but this one obviously took a lot of thought and was very well executed.

I think it was enjoyed on many levels







This guy spent a long time preparing his make up and when finished he just stood stock still but unfortunately everyone walked straight past him with barely a second glance, dropping nothing into his tin





## Photo History



Lynn and I went to see the final days of The Somerset House Christmas ice rink and came across this exhibition there. It was a small display but really excellent with vibrant colours and astounding pieces. My new camera “thank you Lynn” was working overtime

# MARY SIBANDE

## I CAME APART AT THE SEAMS

Mary Sibande is a South African artist who lives and works in Johannesburg. Her sculptures and photographs address the modern history of South Africa and its legacy in the country today.

Sibande is the model in both the photographs and sculptures, appearing as her avatar, Sophie. Clothed in elaborate handmade costumes, Sophie inhabits multiple roles and narratives that allow the artist to explore femininity, blackness, injustice and revolution in South Africa.

This exhibition is the first occasion that Sibande has exhibited together selected works from three series that define her artistic career to date. Each series is marked by a symbolic change in the colour of Sophie's costume. She is first encountered in the traditional blue uniform of a domestic servant as she dreams of the possibilities denied to her through discrimination and inequality. Sophie is then transformed to a fantastical figure in purple who represents the bitter struggle against apartheid and the promise of equality. In her most recent incarnation, Sophie wears red, the colour of anger, as she gives form to popular disaffection and continued civil unrest across South Africa.



## IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS THERE IS ALSO OPPORTUNITY

In these new works from her latest series, In the Midst of Chaos There is Also Opportunity (2017-), Sibande's protagonist has once again been re-imagined. Now described as 'The Red Figure', Sophie expresses a sense of collective disillusionment and anger that the promise of equality that came with post-apartheid democracy has not been fulfilled. However, rather than being simply a destructive force, The Red Figure also occupies the role of a powerful healer and priestess. Empowered by the purpose and sacrifice of those that struggled against apartheid, she readies herself to administer to her nation as it faces renewed turmoil and unrest.

## *I Put a Spell on Me*

2009

Digital print on fabric









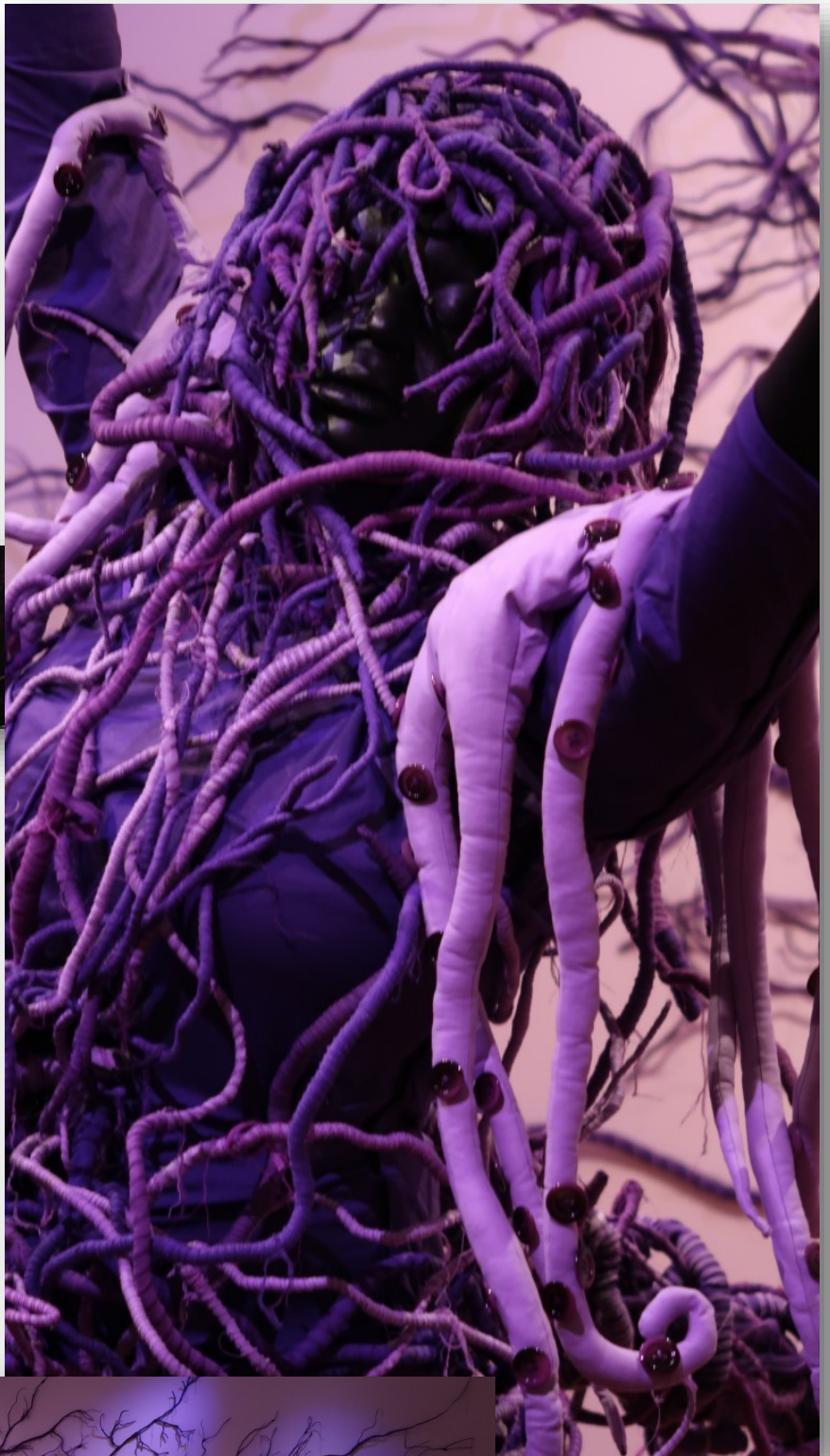


## Photo History

# THE PURPLE SHALL GOVERN

These rooms contain selected works from Sibande's series *The Purple Shall Govern* (2013-17). Here, Sophie has undertaken a complete transformation, re-imagining herself as 'The Purple Figure'. A fever dream of revolutionary struggle, this character embodies the suffering and eventual transition to power that defines the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

The title of the series draws on the 1955 Freedom Charter of the African National Congress (ANC) and its allies, the opening principle of which demanded 'The People Shall Govern!'. Sibande also references the Purple Rain Protest which took place in 1989, when thousands of anti-apartheid, pro-democracy activists marched on the parliament building in Cape Town. Police responded by spraying the protestors with a water cannon filled with purple dye to mark the activists for identification and arrest. However, during the confrontation some of the protestors managed to turn the cannon back on the authorities, ensuring everyone involved - protestors, police, black and white citizens - became the same colour, symbolically blurring the line between race and power.

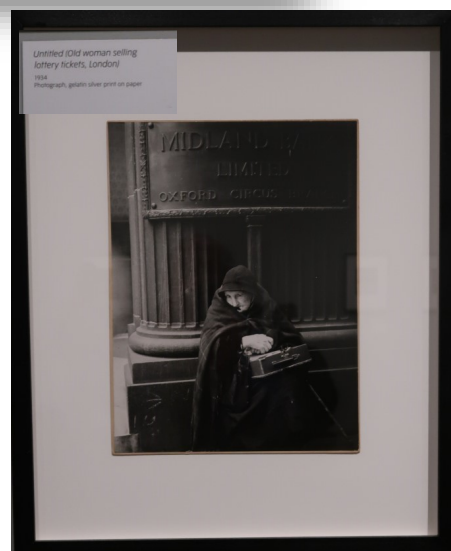
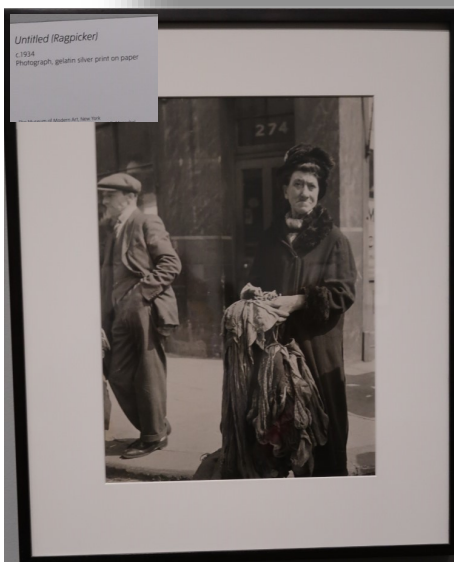
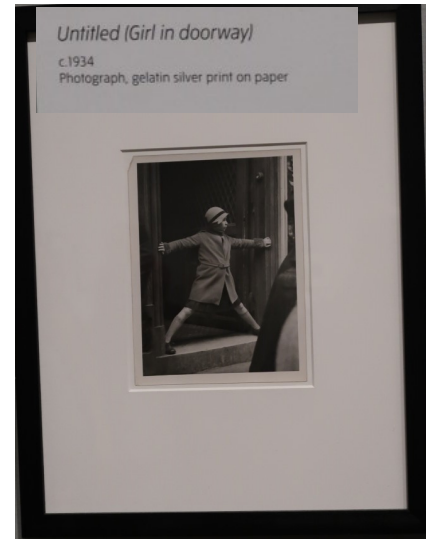
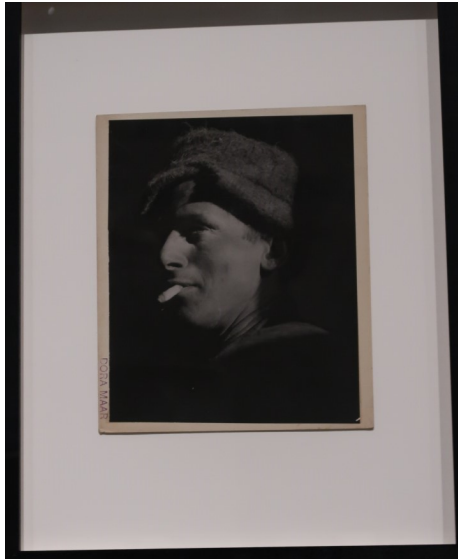




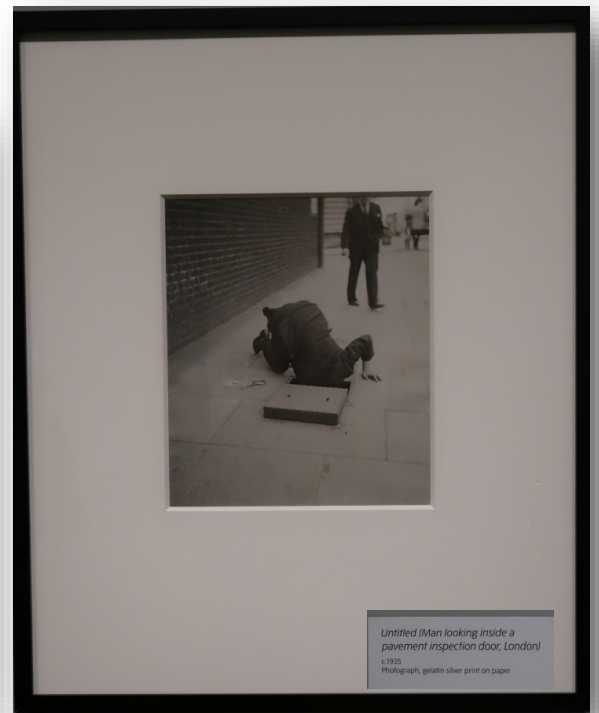




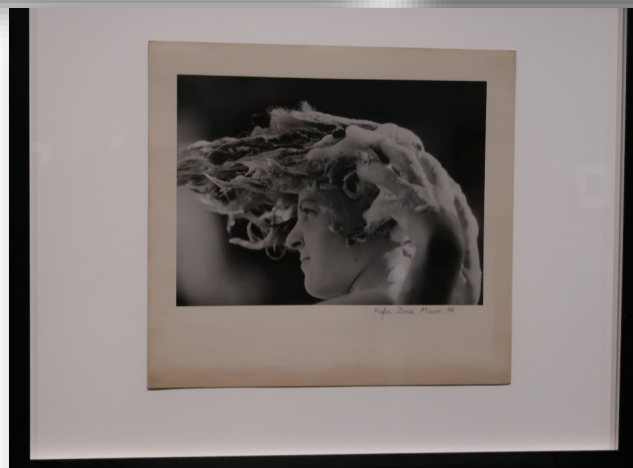
During the 1930s, Dora Maar's provocative photomontages became celebrated icons of surrealism. Her eye for the unusual also translated to her commercial photography, including fashion and advertising, as well as to her social documentary projects. In Europe's increasingly fraught political climate, Maar signed her name to numerous left-wing manifestos – a radical gesture for a woman at that time. Her relationship with Pablo Picasso had a profound effect on both their careers. She documented the creation of his most political work, *Guernica* 1937. Together they made a series of portraits combining experimental photographic and printmaking techniques. In middle and later life Maar withdrew from photography. She concentrated on painting and found stimulation and solace in poetry, religion, and philosophy, returning to her darkroom only in her seventies. This is my favourite style of photography and we are so lucky to have so many great exhibitions in London







These shots are  
my favourites





## Photo History



Nam June Paik's experimental, innovative, work has had a profound influence on today's art and culture. He pioneered the use of TV and video in art and coined the phrase 'electronic superhighway' to predict the future of communication in the internet age. This major exhibition brings together over 200 works from throughout his five-decade career – from robots made from old TV screens, to his innovative video works. Born in South Korea in 1932, but living and working in Japan, Germany and the US, Paik developed a collaborative artistic practice that crossed borders and disciplines



Pablo Picasso 1881–1973

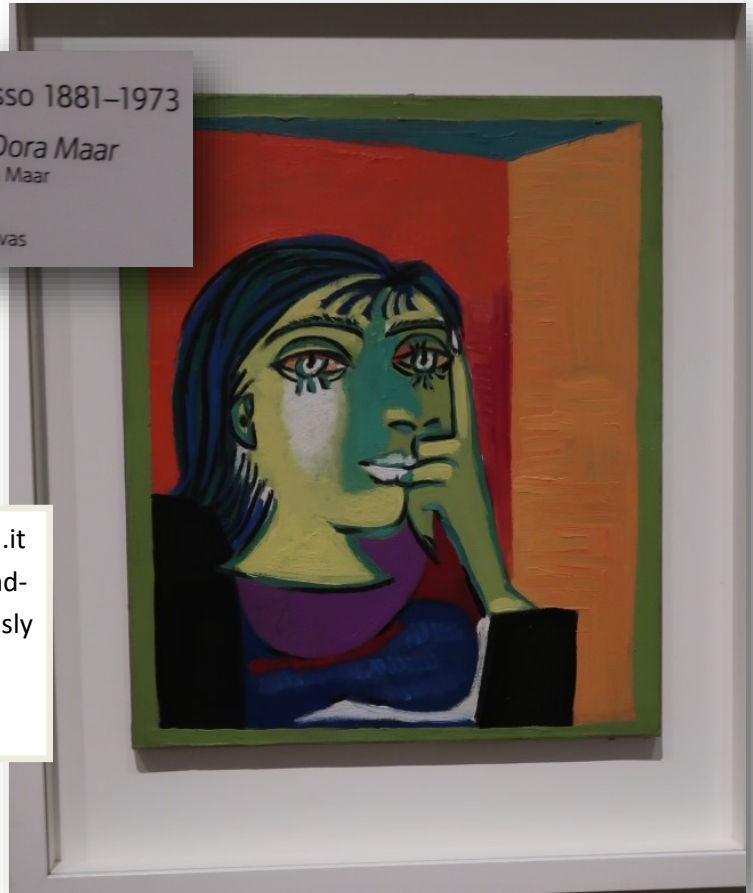
*Portrait of Dora Maar*

Portrait de Dora Maar

1937

Oil paint on canvas

Tate Modern...it was well attended and obviously enjoyed by all age groups



*I have treated cathode ray tube (TV screen) as a canvas.*

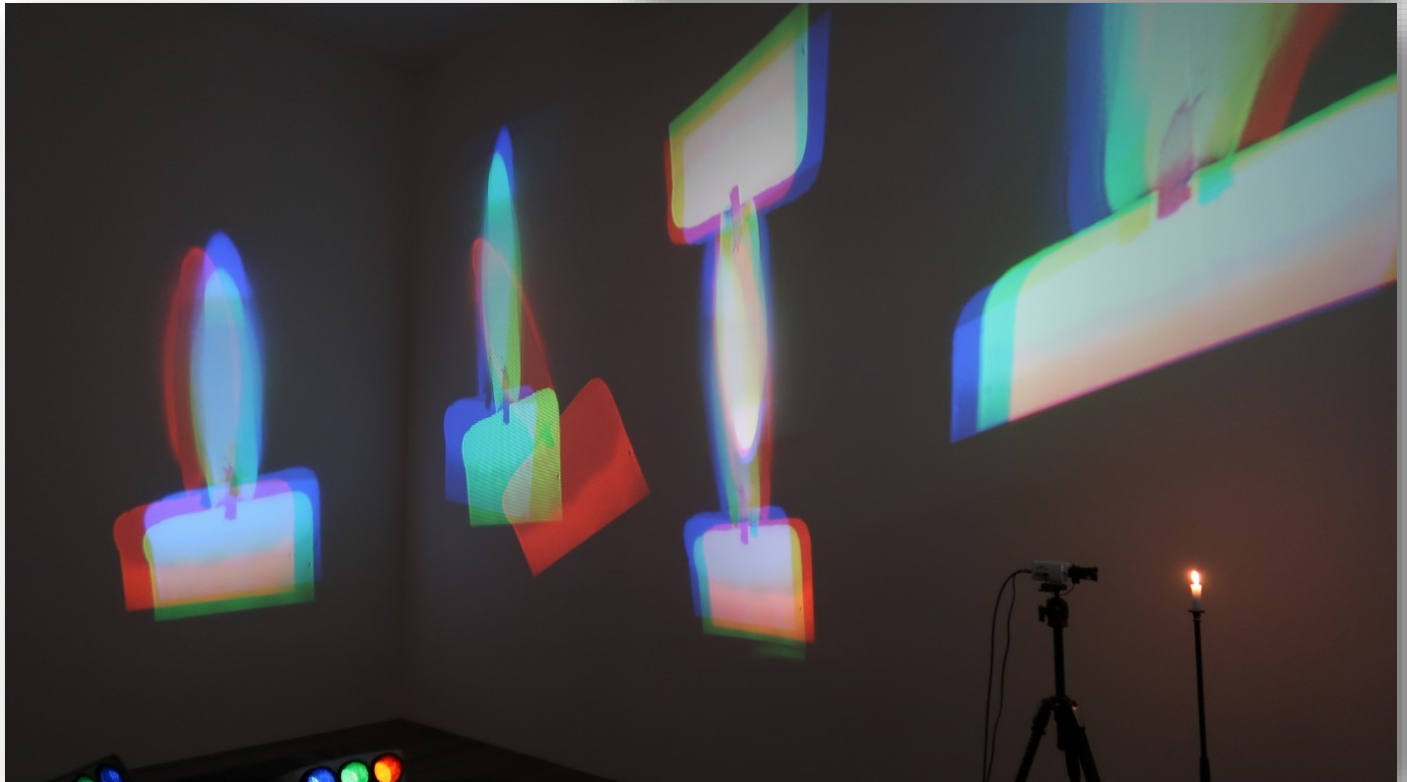
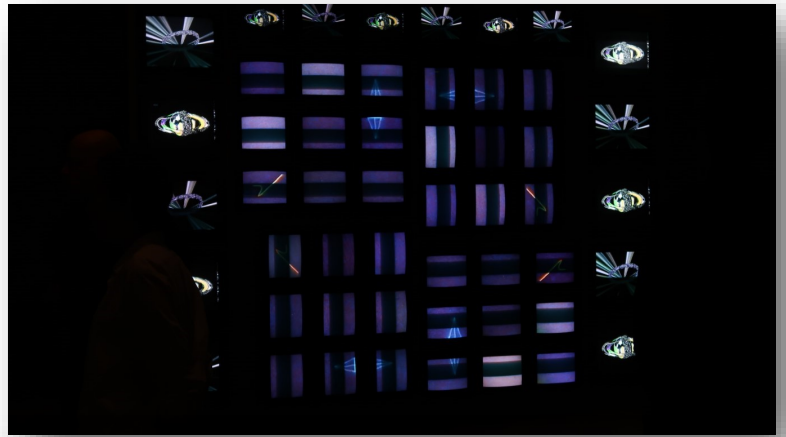
Nam June Paik, 1968







It was a quirky exhibition, but fun and that makes it stand out..





This little girl against my silhouette makes such a great shot







Sometimes slogans  
and posters seem  
to say exactly what  
I think

**I MISS  
MY  
PRE-INTERNET  
BRAIN**





I really don't think this shot needs any comment



February 2020

Rather unusually, I'm writing a little update in the middle of this book...no reason but really just as an update.

Lynn has just celebrated her 75th birthday and what was so evident on that day was how much she is loved and respected by all of us.

Our 'corny- but great' birthday ritual has been on-going for donkey's years now. The birthday boy or girl has to feign total surprise when they stagger out of bed into a darkened kitchen, only illuminated by a solitary candle in a toast bearing the imprint 'Happy Birthday'...Just in case I couldn't find the toast press, Lynn discreetly left it on the table. *Happy Birthday* was then played on Spotify as my voice is terrible ...especially bad early in the morning

I had made a Photo card with badly-scanned rhymes and a few gifts of totally stupid sweets ..like 'shrimps' and liquorice allsorts . The Sweden Trip was my main gift to Lynn. I had managed to get a lovely necklace from a Parisian designer who had made some other pieces for her. Tammy and Ben sent across a massive combination of a helium 75th balloon, sunflowers, a teddy, bottle of wine and some fabulous words. Likewise DP sent (from Panama) a great bouquet from 'a green source' in Truro, again with some smashing and sincere words. Peachy, Beau and Angela sent a most wonderfully worded card with a delightful doll. Other lovely cards came from many friends and it was a real expression of our combined love for a very special person

I have inserted some photos of these cards and flowers all round the house etc in the following pages.

Another great thing on this special day is that Lynn and I were invited to Fir's Farm School to take an assembly telling around 180 youngsters about our Nepal trip and the children in Sikles School. Lynn was a terrific support

Having these children sitting round us, listening and watching attentively, was so enthralling and when their teachers asked them to say '*Namaste to Lynn and Ralph*' , as they left the hall, was an unforgettable moment.

Despite the corona virus numbers still increasing with the resultant possible pandemic panic has not really been grasped by most people yet...maybe just as well



Lynn has always wanted to see The Northern Lights and take a husky ride and reindeer sledge..well, two out of three is not too bad. Northern Lights were not visible due to the low cloud and snow storms.



This signpost was in Bournemouth where we flew to Sweden from



...and this signpost was on the border of Sweden and Finland





Normally I find airport shots a bit corny but Enontekio Airport (from Bournemouth) was a military airfield with just our Enterair Charter flight arriving. They cleared the snow-covered runway specially for our plane



Our luggage which we had to collect from these trucks



The deserted airport. The only passengers were us arriving and the folks departing on the plane we had just left





## Photo History



Davvi Arctic Star (our hotel)



View from our coach approaching our hotel in Karesuando







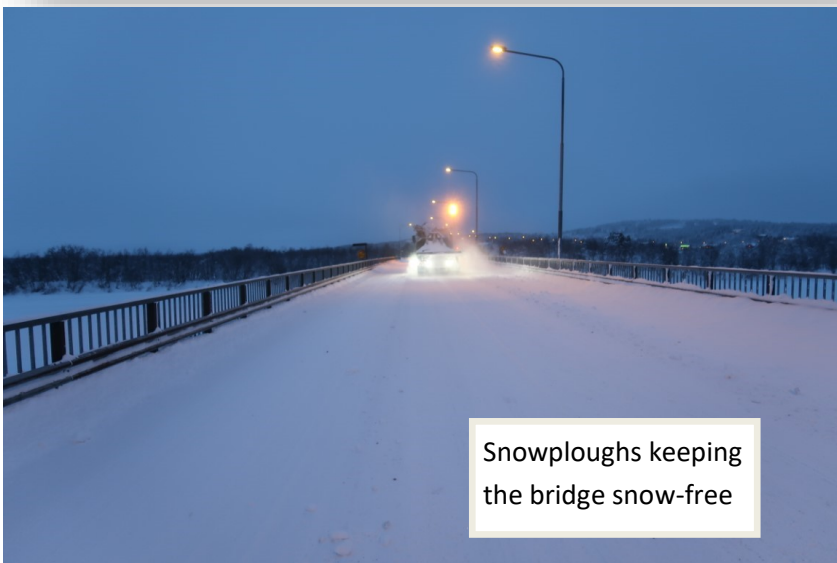
## Photo History



It was so cold (-20) outside that our bar kept the ice-cubes on the window sill...



Karesuando was so totally different from anything we had experienced before. It is a small village at the very North of Sweden straddling a frozen river separating Sweden and Finland. The bridge joining the two countries is free of any border controls and customs and yet the currency is different as is the time difference. Only about 200 people live here but their existence must be very lonely



Snowploughs keeping the bridge snow-free



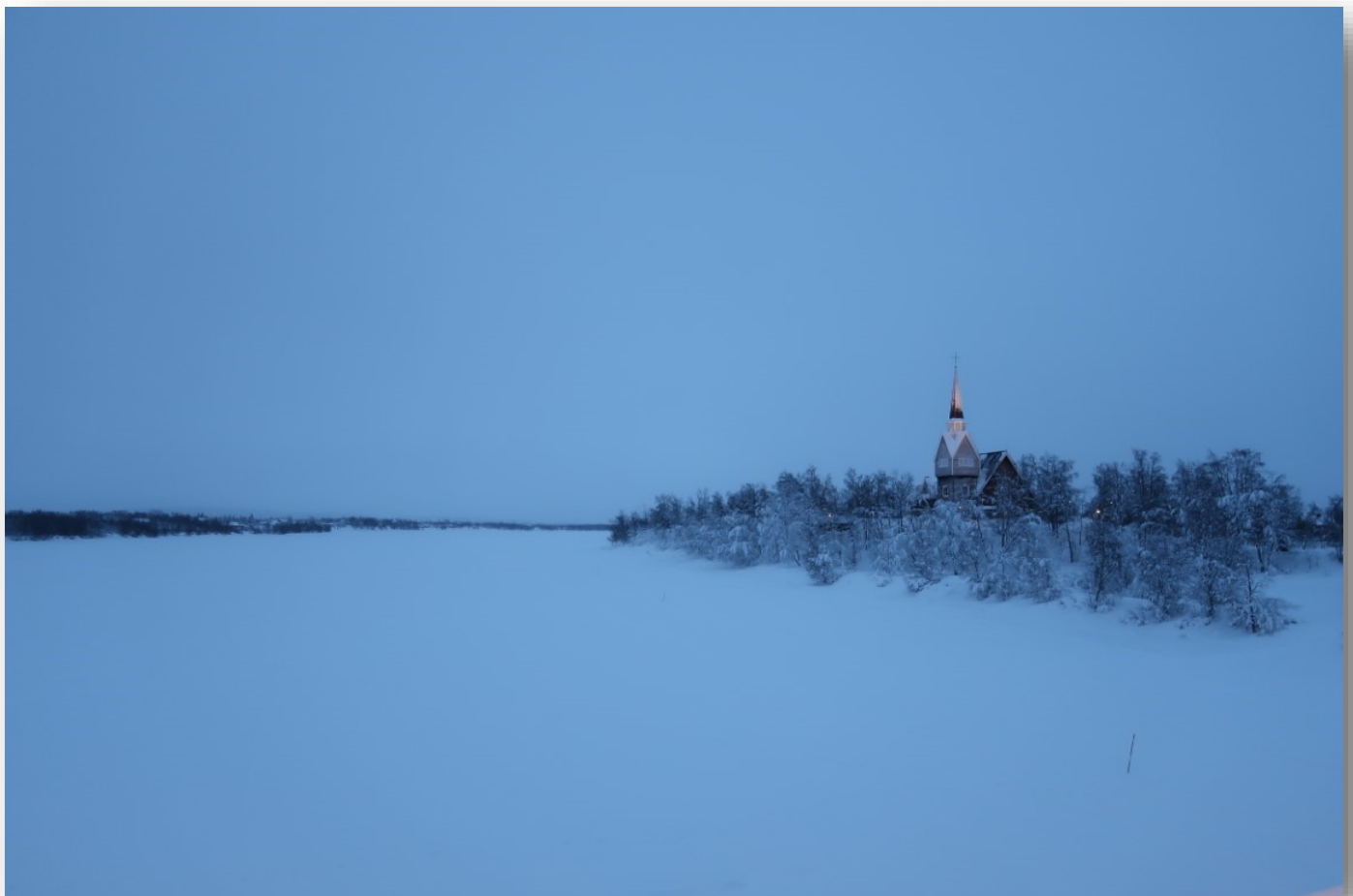


## Photo History



"I know I left my car somewhere round here"





The **Karesuando Church** is a wooden Church completed in 1905 replacing an older church. The church is the northernmost in Sweden. It sits alongside this frozen river separating Sweden from Finland



## Photo History



As this extreme environment was so different we kept a blog of our experiences and I have inserted it alongside the relevant photos.

### SNOWMOBILE EXPERIENCE

Our mini bus left our hotel punctually as always with the great cheerful staff aboard and we were taken to a clearing in the snowy woods where we were kitted out with helmets and then taken outside to see the great array of waiting snowmobiles shining and looking super-cool.

We were given a safety briefing and told how to attach the emergency cut-out to our wrist that would automatically cut the engine if the snowmobile overturned. Lifting the cut out and pressing the starter brought them roaring into life with headlights illuminating the snow around them.

We followed the lead snowmobile at safe distances and the skis made grooves in the snow so it was comparatively easy to follow the trail. Lynn sat behind me and we leaned professionally on the bends and once we got used to it it became more naturel and a fabulous way of traversing the snowy woods and wilderness. We were glad there was a lead bike as we would have been totally lost. After a long ride we arrived back, took off our helmets and all felt very proud having achieved something none of us had done before. This was considered one of those memorable experiences and again the guys running the operation were really enthusiastic and made it great fun.







## Photo History



### ICE FISHING

There were several extra attractions available supplementing the included attractions and ice fishing sounded obscure enough and attracted our desire to participate in something we obviously hadn't done before (and for that matter, was pretty unlikely we would do again)

No-one else had booked that attraction...we wondered why!! Surely sitting on a frozen river on a reindeer skin in minus 15 with a worm on a hook lowered into a hole that we had drilled into the ice had a universal appeal?...obviously not.

Our 'adventure' started on a questionable note as apparently no one from the other hotel had booked this either and normally a 4 person minimum was required. However they agreed to take just us two 'loonies'

Our transport arrived and just Lynn and I were whisked along the snow-covered road in the mini bus and along a snowy tree forest track where we were cheerfully greeted by Alex and Will who explained once again the safe way to drive our snowmobile. It seemed more straightforward this time.

We set off with Alex leading on a heavy duty snowmobile and Will took up the rear. These bikes are great bits of kit, with ours costing around £11,000 and his was approx. £19,000 with a much sturdier motor and larger and heavier size. His could also be used to tow a sledge with maybe two youngsters plus a pillion passenger.

This time we had more control over our snowmobile as the heavy snow had covered the terrain unlike the previous day when our skis followed the tracks in the snow making it difficult to make alternative turns. Alex said we should allow a fair distance from his bike as there was a possibility that the snow had covered earlier tracks which may have frozen causing a bumpy surface which could throw our bikes off course. He explained that if he felt this he would signal to me so we could speedily alter course to avoid turning the bike over....quite a hairy introduction.

We followed a beautiful tree-lined narrow path with the small trees bent over with the weight of the snow and came out on the fast intercountry road. This road led to the long bridge over the frozen river separating Sweden and Finland and on which occasional arctic cars sped along in a flurry of snow. They boys signalled us to stop and checked that our path was safe.

With a thumbs up we were safe to cross the highway and we then made our way down onto the really wide frozen river stretching into the distance with nothing to be seen other than snow stretching to infinity and occasional snow-covered trees on the distant banks.

Finland on one side and Sweden on the other.

We followed Alex trying our best to follow his tracks in the totally unmarked snow. This was much more difficult than it sounds as we were travelling at around 30kph which to us seemed incredibly fast.





## Photo History



Suddenly our snowmobile lost traction and stopped but the engine was still running. Revving it had no effect and when Alex looked back he circled round to see what the trouble was. We looked below our snowmobile and saw water!!!...Not a great thing to see when you know you are in the middle of a 'so-called' frozen river. Luckily he quickly re-assured us that the surface ice melts sometimes and the thick snow layer insulates the melt water and this can not be seen.

Fine, we felt reassured but this was before we found that his heavier bike had sunk in much deeper. The two lads then tried every trick to move them and get mobile and Lynn and I offered to help as we felt pretty helpless watching them struggle but they refused. Apparently, the melt-water where they were was deeper than that surrounding our stranded bike and they were wearing much higher boots than ours. If we had attempted to approach them our boots would have been swamped and with wet feet there was a very real risk of the water freezing causing speedy frostbite. We stayed where we were!

There was a quiet like we had rarely experienced. Nothing but the four of us , the three snowmobiles and the frozen river and snow as far as the eye could see. Some frantic phone calls eventually bought two big guys on another snowmobile who with a lot of straining eventually managed to pull both our bikes out of the water.

They felt more secure in drilling our ice holes closer to the bridge where the ice was known to be firmer and where the ice road went. Using large spiral drills we managed (with instructions) to drill our two ice holes and then seated on reindeer skins next to the holes, we lowered our bait about 1.5 metres into the lake making sure the line didn't snag on the surface ice.

No luck...we felt like we were giving our worms swimming lessons but we felt fantastic having achieved another 'first' for Lynn and Ralph.







## REINDEER FARM

### Photo History

The coach picked us up from our hotel dead on time again and by now we knew that we should allow ample time to get our (provided) thick 'all-in-one' snow suits on over our numerous layers of thermals, tee shirts, etc etc.. Even putting on the provided heavy duty snow boots was an art form.

Every exposed part was covered with snoods, hats with ear flaps, scarves etc. Three pairs of thermal socks and two pairs of gloves completed the outfit and believe me, every bit of clothing was totally necessary, especially when the wind was blowing the snow and lowering the wind chill factor. Lynn loves snow and was in her element but I am not so keen, although I had to admit it was a unique experience and had a beauty that we had never seen before.

The isolation of the area was so daunting and we wondered how the 200 villagers could live in this environment. Many locals were Sumi who are very hardy folk and herd their reindeer in a more modern take on a nomadic life style. They now use snowmobiles where previously they had tethered two reindeer and skied bravely rounding up their herd. Apparently all reindeer are owned and despite their wild lifestyle they are all identifiable and tagged.

When we arrived, en masse, at this isolated farm we were shown the castrated male reindeer tethered in sixes to their sleds and we were then led out for a leisurely ride. They were lovely looking animals but despite being on a farm retained their wild ways They did not react to humans like the friendly huskies. Many had suede on their antlers and if you touched them they tried to dislodge it on you as it itched them and this caused a few surprises from the various folk trying to touch their antlers.

On the ride back we experienced a wind which blew the snow across the open snow-covered wilderness and despite trying to cover my ears with my gloves this was the coldest I have ever been.

Just in time we arrived back and were welcomed into a traditional smoke-filled tepee boasting a roaring log fire in a crucible on chains in the centre. Once our eyes adjusted to the gloom we were offered a 'glock' which was a drink made from assorted red and black berries but was a non- alcoholic version of the original.

A great touch followed when we were given long metal skewers, with a beef sausage on the business end. These were grilled on the glowing wood embers and tasted really great.

Slowly having thawed out we then went into the deer enclosure with handfuls of moss and attempted to feed the deer all of which varied in colour and size. Despite obviously being hungry many refused the outstretched hand with tempting moss until it fell to the ground where it was hastily eaten. It dawned on us that obviously the deer were still wild animals and were used to foraging in the snow for food. Having it handed to them was alien to their normal lifestyle.

This, despite being obviously laid on for visitors, was a very enjoyable and memorable experience



The reindeer from the sled behind caught up with us



Feeding the reindeer in the enclosure





On the frozen lake



Husky Experience

The coach arrived punctually and we were told that the huskies would bark excitedly when we arrived as they loved the run and knew that this was imminent. They looked really beautiful and two things were obvious immediately. One was that they all looked different and it was explained that they were selected for their stamina and personality rather than looks. We also noticed that many had a white round pupil which is known as marble eye but we are not sure the cause of this. Once we were all seated two per sleigh on reindeer pelts we left and the dogs worked well together in teams of six. One could see immediately that they enjoyed the run and followed the lead pack.

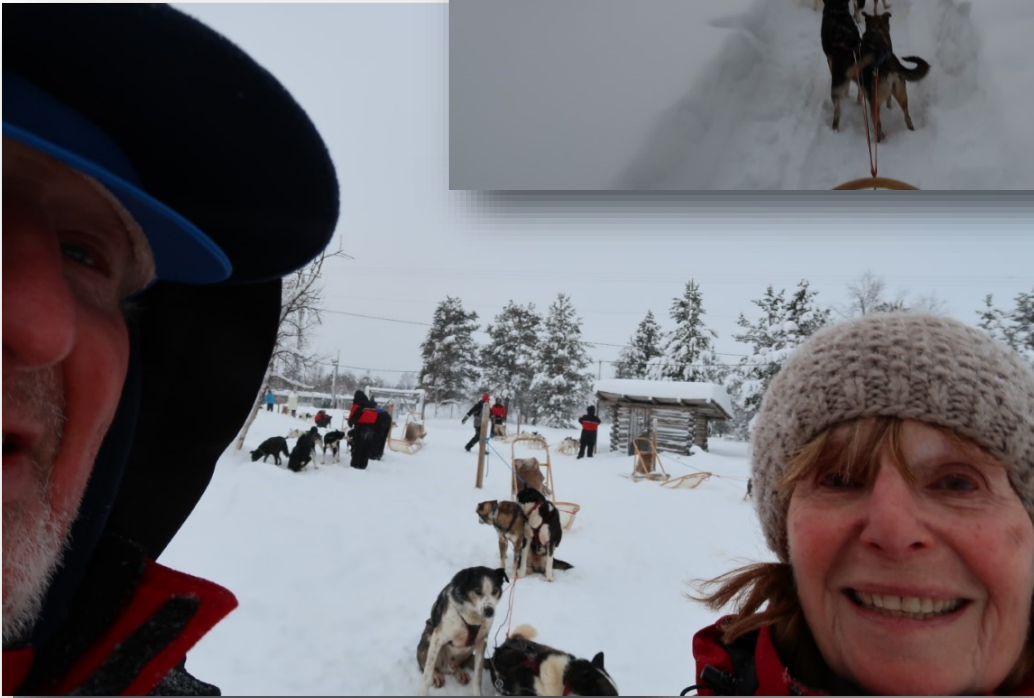
It was a very enjoyable experience but what made it special was their affectionate nature when we arrived back. They visibly returned the affection that we all showered on them and we realised how they had been bred to be a wonderful asset in these extreme conditions. It was extremely cold but other than some visible trembling, they seemed very content. As they arrived back there was a lot of barking from all the other dogs in the kennel area but the working dogs totally disregarded this barking as they were still working.



Lynn with the huskies







With our delightful huskies





### Photo History



### WOODLAND NIGHT WALK

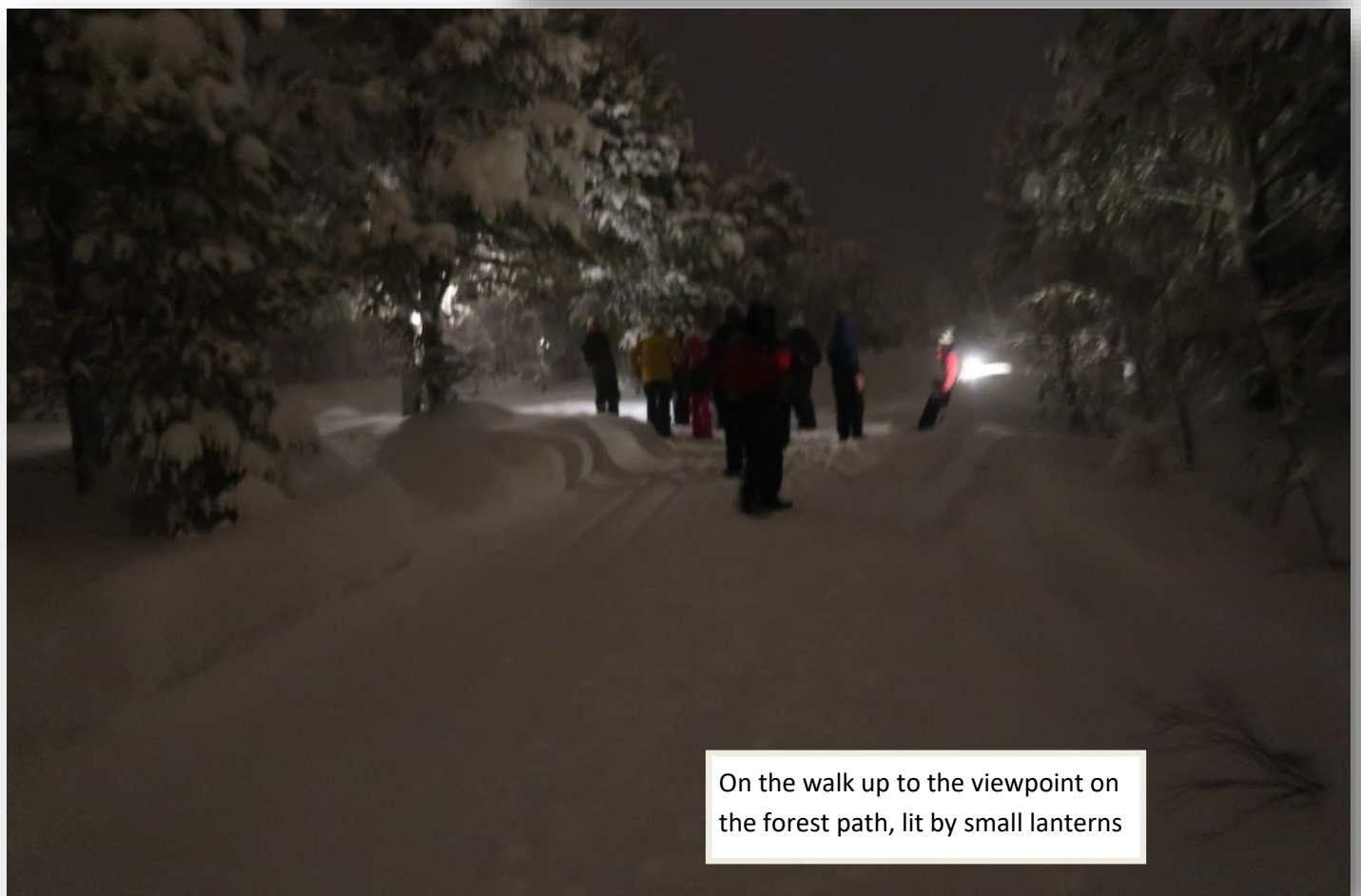
The highlight of this evening walk to a high point was to see The Northern Lights but unfortunately due to an unusually large amount of snow with winds, the atmosphere was too unclear to afford us any sighting of this phenomenon.

However we left our minibus and followed a fairly steep windy path through the woods. Every few metres small lights were suspended from the trees and it was a beautiful, if tiring, walk. As we ascended we were not aware of the steep gradient but the deep snow, despite having been cleared earlier, still made walking 'heavy going'.

As we got to the peak there was a fire going which we all sat round enjoying a glass of 'glock'. We all had a good laugh together and got our breath back before making our way back down to the waiting mini bus. Descending made us aware of how steep the climb up had been and we all got back to the hotel pretty exhausted...took off all our layers and layers and then met in the lounge/bar for a great evening until we realised it was midnight and the bar had closed much earlier.

Another great day

The welcome fire and hot drinks at the summit



On the walk up to the viewpoint on the forest path, lit by small lanterns

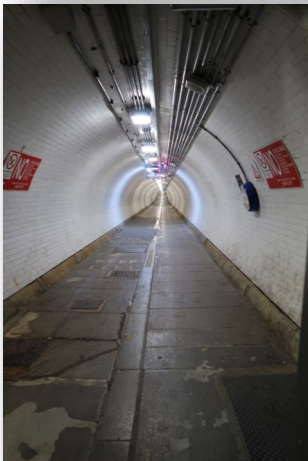
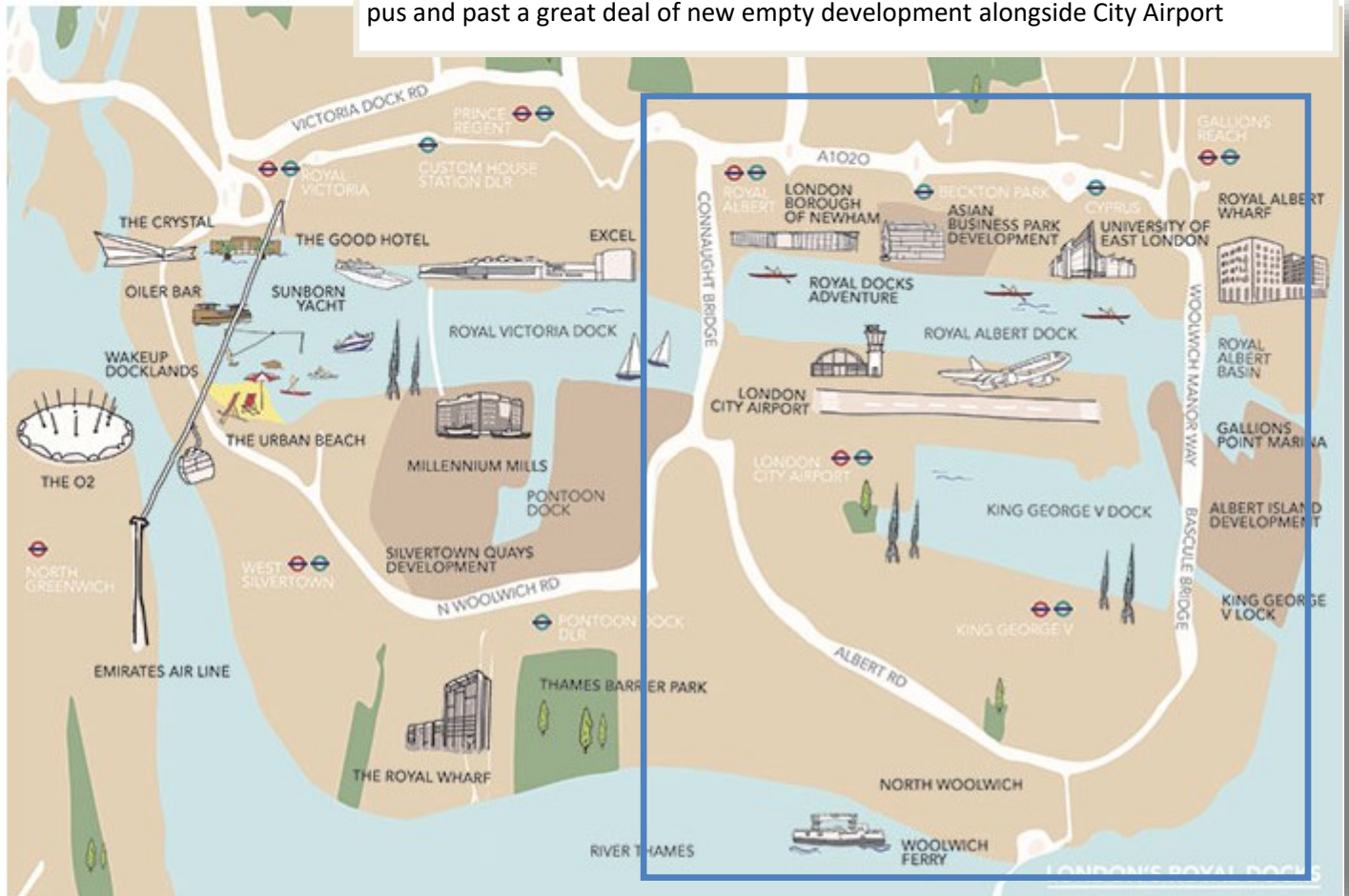








A planned walk with Cyril and Viv took us on the DLR to King George V Station and then via the foot tunnel under the Thames and back on The Woolwich Ferry. We then circled the RAB (Royal Albert Dock) by the large University of East London campus and past a great deal of new empty development alongside City Airport



The tunnel entrance on the north and south sides and the deserted foot tunnel below with traffic queuing for the ferry







## Royal Albert Dock

Located on one side of London City Airport's runway, Royal Albert Dock still has, on occasion, vessels passing through the swing bridge. At the far end of Royal Albert Dock there is the main campus of the University of East London



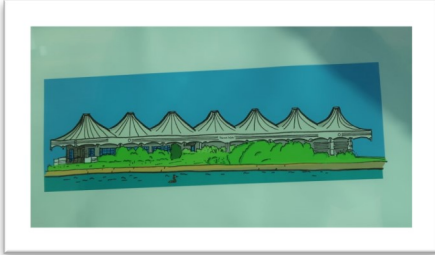
Fascinating sights: the swing bridge into the docks, the campus buildings, the old railway station, The Woolwich ferry, the Thames Barrier and planes at City Airport







## Photo History

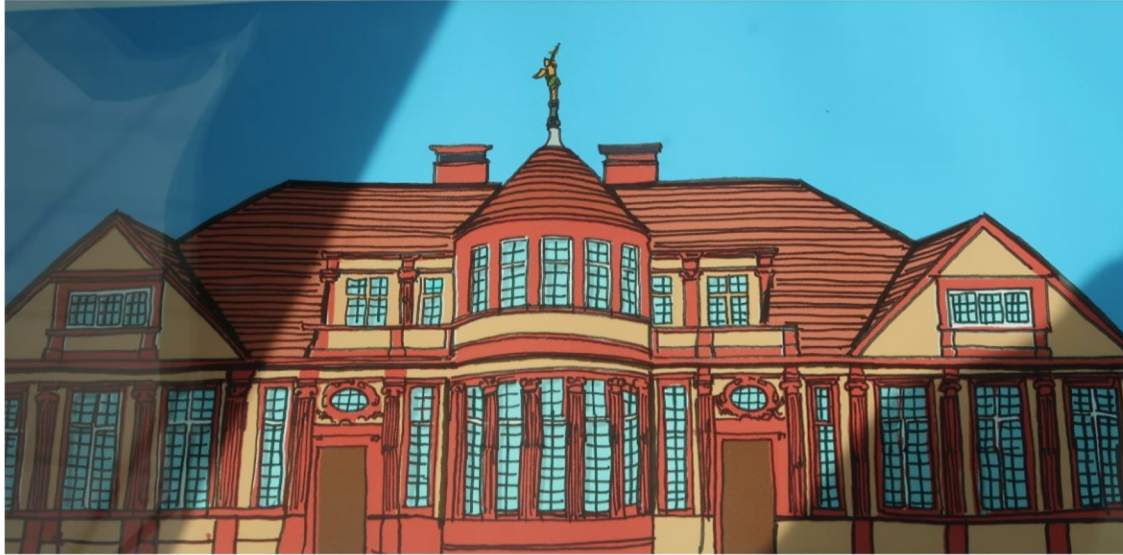


The Charing Cross  
Pier derelict,  
plane taking off  
very steeply,  
Houses by an old  
slipway, The new  
development (all  
empty) at Royal  
Albert Docks













## Photo History



**Sometimes while researching facts to supplement my photos I find interesting snippets and I thought the following would be appreciated here...**

These are the phrases and sayings that have been part of life in and around the Royal Docks community. Much of the language originated in poverty – imagery that summed up poor lives.

Many areas of London are considered to be 'cockney', but in truth, the old county borough of West Ham, and the sub-districts of Canning Town, Custom House, Silvertown and North Woolwich have probably the best claim. They represent the pushing out of the East End by industrialists who escaped legislation and restrictions by crossing the River Lea.

The phrases and sayings we have used bring humour into play and keeps the conversation flowing – something we are really good at in our manor.

This joke describes a 'Cockney life story in two sentences. A girl is alone with her grandfather and tells him: "Grandad, I'm in the family way." He replies: "Wait till you are my age darling – you'll be in everybody's way."

A phrase to describe déjà vu or Groundhog day, perhaps with a slight twist: "It's the same meat, different gravy,"

If one is impatient with someone who could not make up their mind or who was dithering. "He doesn't know if he wants a sh\*t or a haircut," was a phrase well used

In the Royal Docks community many of the words and phrases we use stem from the dockers. They had a language of their own which quickly penetrated into all local lives.

'Perm' was short for permanent as against a casual employee. 'Greenace', means goods falling out of a sling during the loading of ships. "There's been a greenacre, was heard after an accident". And so it also became used as a warning cry like 'look out.'

Dockers used to stand on the cobbles in the street outside the Connaught Pub in Custom House for decades waiting outside the dock gates to see if they were chosen for casual work that day, and to get their work ticket. This became known as waiting 'On The Cobbles.' Former docker John Ringwood is one of the figures in the bronze statue commemorating dock workers outside the ExCeL centre in Custom House.

He said: "There were also phrases for the tools we used. The work could be exhausting and there were two hammers, one weighing 12lb (a weight just under that of the maximum ball used in ten-pin bowling nowadays), the most used one, and another a 24lb much heavier hammer for the big jobs when something really needed shifting," said John.

That became universally known as 'The Monday Hammer': "'Cos it was so blooming heavy that by the time you got to Tuesday it was too heavy to lift!"

If a screwdriver wouldn't do the job to get a screw into a wall, you should reach for a special tool to complete the job... 'the American screwdriver' he called it. He went to get it from his overflowing toolbox. It was a hammer! Another dock phrase was 'billo' – as in 'look out below' – shouted as a warning when something fell from a height.

People had to virtually fight to get a work ticket from the man standing on a box giving them all out in the morning. Of course, there are some hyper-local phrases, and one that passed through many generations in the Silvertown and North Woolwich communities and beyond the others in the Royal Docks and Newham was 'catching a Bridger.'

When the big up and down bridge near Harland and Wolfe was up and the swing bridge near the Connaught was turned around, all effectively trapped in the "island" community, unable to get out. Traffic stood still and it could be incredibly frustrating. The bridges were raised to let ships in or out of the docks. "It was"part of local life."

The word 'weeny' was used for the smallest one in a group of kids. He (or she) was made to keep 'lookout' is a group of youngsters were getting up to mischief. The phrase 'wide boy' after over 100 years use in markets and fairs that phrase became adopted as a common term in the 1940s to describe someone who was a bit of a swindler, or knowing and 'had got his wits about him.'

Many in the communities are thought a bit common because of their accents – but though often criticised for dropping our h's, so do the French, "But we were and are neither more or less literate than the rest." Cockneys have a strong code of politeness and respectability.



## Photo History



The basic words taught as children were 'lady' and 'gentleman.'

These sayings and phrases mean so much to so many of us – and keep our lives grounded in reality. But it's the general good humour and laughter and smiles they create that shines through,

This raised a laugh among friends when going to the loo: "I'm going to strain the cabbage." or : "I'm going to shake hands with my best friend." Toilet humour has survived completely and remains a favourite. "Wherever you may be, let your wind go free." 'Jimmy Riddle', 'Having a slash' and 'having a leak' are all in frequent use.

Mum's favourite warning to her children was: "If you fall off and break your leg don't come running to me."

When someone in his family had bad luck or didn't quite get the result they wanted they were told: "You thought you had a motorbike, but only got the handle."

Someone who had done something wrong was always said to 'have made a right ricket,' "If you were a bit slow or dim, you might also have been said to be as thick as two short planks."

Pretending to be something she really wasn't: "She's all fur coat and no knickers."

Those in our communities always have been unable to forgive meanness.

Tight and stingy are words we use to describe this trait. Or "Tighter than a gnat's a\*se" or "He wouldn't give you the drippings off his nose."

To able to prosper without much effort. "If he fell down the bog, he'd come up with a gold watch!"

Mealtime is another source for phrases of excellence, as well as greediness..

If one overate, you are known as 'greedy guts' or a 'greedy pig' or 'a right gannet.'

We also eat dinner in the middle of the day. Lunch is a snack taken to work for the middle of the morning. The final part of dinner is 'afters' and the main course is 'before's.'

Two World Wars gave a bit of a melting pot to our language. Our communities and Cockney, in general, acquired a few catch-phrases in this way.

From the First World War: 'Parley-Vous' was one. Having a chat, it then became 'parlayvoo' or 'having a parlay' meant talking or 'having a conflagration.'

'San Fairy Ann' is also still used for 'it doesn't matter'. And words came from Romany Gipsies. 'Mush' is used in the same way as 'mate'.

It can also be used as face, as in : "He took one right in the mush," which is believed to have come from 'mouche' the bull's eye of a target.

The Romanys also brought us the word Chavvy for child. Nowadays the meaning is a tad more derogatory!

One of the classic phrases for being lonely or on your own is: 'On Your Jack' , short for Jack Jones. This rhyming slang is probably the Jack Jones who was an East London MP in the 1920s.

The area had a reputation for patriotism, stemming from the damage it suffered during the Blitz. The virtue of Cockneys lwas to show a brave face and good humour. 'London Can Take It' was chalked and painted on walls during the war. You could not say the same for places like Hampstead.





## Photo History



To many from this neck of the woods, an anti-royalist is someone who wants to take away the chance of a good old knees-up. The monarchy is good at that.

The senior citizens of today still remember the playground phrases of their youth. "Why are Mrs Simpson's drawers like the flag at Buckingham Palace? Because they go up and down at the King's command."

But though drink is so liked so many phrases for it are mostly contemptuous.

'Drink; 'drunk' 'a quick one'. Booze is the universal noun and verb!

The pub is the boozier. Referred to getting 'p\*ssed as a newt' or 'half-cut' or 'blind drunk.' Gin is still known as 'mother's ruin'

If one is confused it's 'the beer-talking'. The end of hours is still 'chucking out time' which has also become common usage for other venues. "When is chucking out time at the library or shop."

The rich language locally in the last 70-80 years gives phrases for every occasion. For a disappointment or failure, or anti-climax there's the popular: "Well that was after the Lord Mayor's Show,"

Explaining how things work or have happened, is usually topped off with phrases like: "Now you know how many beans make five."

Or the phrases: "That's how milk got in the coconut," and "It's as true as I'm standing here."

Money (and lack of it) is also a ripe source for phrases that have stood the test of time...it's serious stuff after all. "Out of debt, out of danger."

Prices are compared with sayings like: "How much did they rush you for that?" The phrase "couple of bob" is anything but when asking for a loan. It applies to any amount!

Dirtiness is generally frowned on. 'Cleanliness is next to Godliness' can often be accompanied by 'You could eat your dinner off the floor in her place.'

Home and family are most important – in real life. It's one of the few things that is true in EastEnders! It's at the centre of their lives.

The area outside our front doors is still known to everyone as the 'doorstep,' even though you may live in a block of flats. Hospitality is vital. It means a cup of tea or coffee. A welcome caller is still greeted with the phrase: 'If I'd known you were coming I'd have put the kettle on or baked a cake.'

Visitors love to say: 'I'm gasping or gagging for a cuppa.'

A guest often uses the phrase: "I'll have to love and leave you," as they get ready to go.

Manners remain important. "I can't take you anywhere," is often said mockingly to someone who may have crossed a little line, normally with humour.

'Where were you brought up?' or 'Would you do that at home' may also follow.

The last words – as usual – should go to the women.

They have their own collection of comments on men.

'I wouldn't be seen dead with him' or 'I've seen better things crawl out of cheese.' They might even weigh in 'he fancies himself, don't he?



Photo History



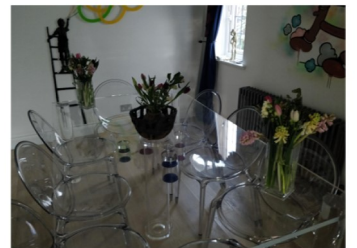




Photo History



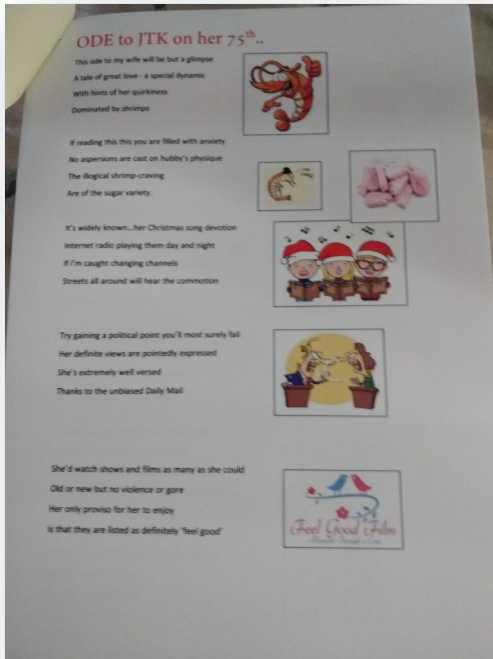
Flowers everywhere



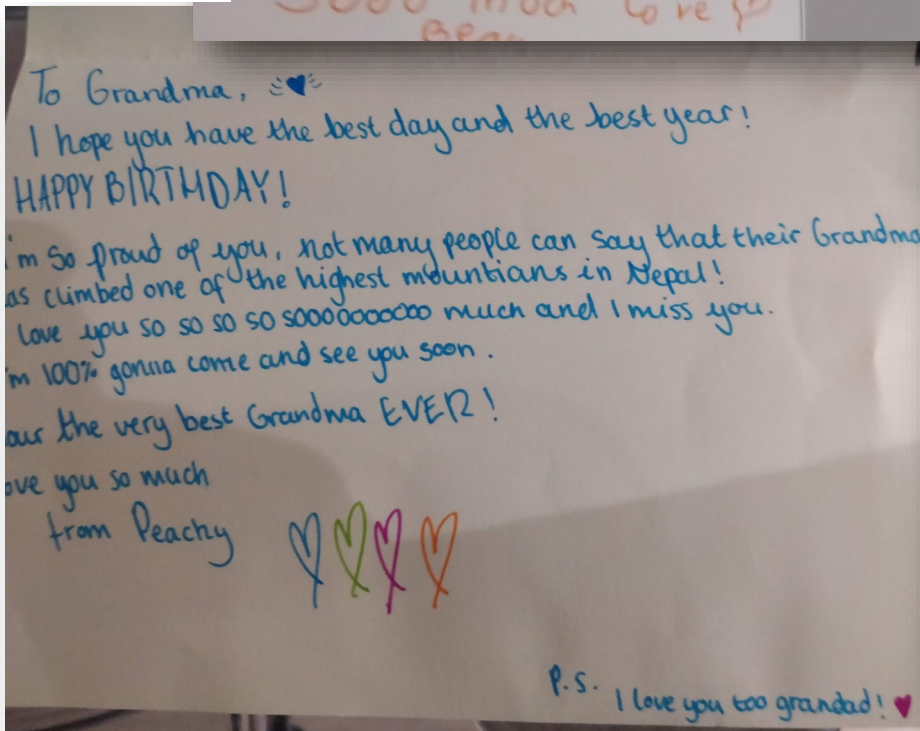
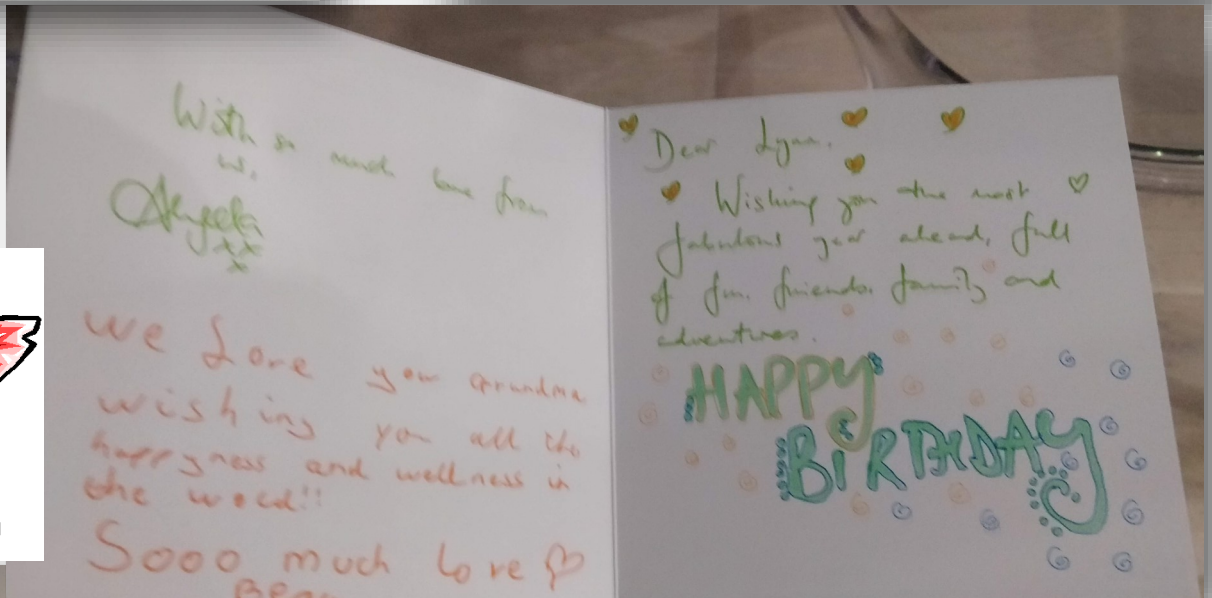




## Photo History



## Cards and poems etc

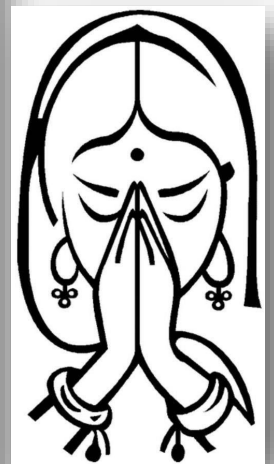






### Photo History

On Lynn's birthday we were asked to take the youngsters' assembly at Fir's Farm School showing our pictures and videos of our trek to Sikles School in Nepal. This is as we were setting up the projector



6 classes of approx. 30 each sat round us here and their teachers asked them questions at the conclusion. They seemed to have taken in a lot of what we were showing and exited saying Namaste to us







## Photo History

Cyril, Gerald and myself often walk in various London locations, often tying up previous walks. This was the Green Link Walk where we started at Crystal Palace

The site of the original Crystal Palace



John Logie-Baird lived here



Interesting views from the high points





Cyril contemplating potential uses for the Torture chair seen in The Horniman Museum

**Torture chair**  
'It will ever prove an irrefragable witness of diabolic cruelty, such as nothing but religious bigotry and intolerance could have created.'  
*Sussex Daily News, January 1890*  
In 1890 Frederick bought this relic of the Spanish Inquisition for the museum. The 'torture chair' had been found in pieces in a dungeon.



The Green Link Walk took in several interesting local cemeteries

